

Private Vehicle Modifications

Definition: Private Vehicle Modifications are modifications to a privately owned vehicle used to transport the waiver participant and any equipment needed by the participant which makes the vehicle accessible. Modifications to any government subsidized vehicle is not permitted. Private Vehicle Modifications may not be used for general repair of the vehicle. The approval process for Private Vehicle Modifications is initially determined by you based on the participant's needs as identified and documented in the plan of care, the consultation/assessment results (if applicable) and the availability of a privately owned vehicle that would be used for transportation on a routine basis. The criterion used in assessing an participant's need for this service are: 1) The parent or family member cannot transport the participant because the participant cannot get in or out of the vehicle; or 2) the participant can drive but cannot get in or out of the vehicle and a modification to the vehicle would resolve this barrier. Bids for the service are obtained and submitted along with documentation of the need to SCDDSN. Each request is reviewed programmatically and fiscally before approval is given. The approval process is the same for any privately owned vehicle modification, regardless of ownership.

For details on the consultations please see the Private Vehicle Assessment/Consultation section of the CSW manual.

Providers: Private Vehicle Modifications must be provided by vendors who are enrolled with SCDHHS as Waiver Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers or by DDSN/DSN Boards/contracted providers. **A vendor enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider cannot opt to bill the Financial Manager.** The provider list for this service is located on DDSN's website.

In most instances, Private Vehicle Modifications are provided by a vendor enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider. There may, however, be circumstances where a participant's needs can be met by a vendor that is not enrolled with SCDHHS. Vendors who are not enrolled with SCDHHS **must** contract with the Financial Manager to Private Vehicle Modifications.

Arranging for the Service: Before proceeding with bid requests, the **Private Vehicle Modifications Fact Sheet (Community Supports Info Sheet-3)** must be given to the participant and/or legal guardian. The information included in this fact sheet should be explained fully.

Once the participant's specific need has been identified and documented in the Plan and it is determined that Private Vehicle Modifications is the appropriate service to meet the need, the scope of the work/specifications must be determined. This should be done in consultation with the participant and/or family and should define the expected modifications as clearly as possible. There are two ways to accomplish this task:

1. You can define the expected modifications by meeting with the participant/family, examining the vehicle, reviewing the modifications that are needed, and developing some parameters in writing to provide to the providers submitting bids. This is a crucial step to ensure that all requested provider bids are based on similar expectations.

OR

The expected modifications can also be defined by obtaining a Private Vehicle Modification Consultation. For more details on this option see the Private Vehicle Consultation section of the CSW manual.

Bids:

- Any purchase up to \$2500.00 does not require securing competitive written bids.
- Any purchase from \$2500.00 to \$10,000 requires the verbal solicitation of three (3) different written bids. A “no-bid” response is accepted as part of the solicitation process.
- Any purchase over \$10,000 requires the written solicitation of bids, from various providers, and the project must be advertised following the procurement policy.

The written specifications that are developed, either by you or by an independent consultant, must be provided to the providers when requesting bids and each provider’s bid must be based on the specifications. Furthermore, the participant will have to be present when the provider examines the vehicle.

Please Note:

There is often a problem with written quotes being more than sixty (60) calendar days old. Since the cost of materials increase regularly, a bidder may not honor a written quote after thirty (30) or sixty (60) calendar days. The Waiver Coordinator must assure all bids submitted to SCDDSN Central Office for review are current and valid. This may require contacting bidders for confirmation before submitting quotes to SCDDSN Central Office.

If any change is needed with the proposed modifications (change in specifications) during or after the solicitation of written bids, the solicitation process must be stopped. A written amendment of the specifications must be completed and sent to all potential bidders who received the original specifications, so each has opportunity to respond to the amended solicitation. All bidders must submit a written bid on the written amended specifications so we can assure bidding is on identical project requirements. A copy of the written amendment to the specifications and the subsequent bids must be submitted to Central Office for internal review.

Once the scope of the modification has been determined and put in writing by you or independent consultant, a listing of available providers should be shared with the participant/family or the participant should be made aware of the qualifications for providers and asked to select providers to give at list three written bids. This offering of choice of provider must be documented in the participant’s file.

Obtaining Bids: You should assist the family as needed in scheduling and arranging for at least three (3) written bids from providers. Three (3) written bids must be obtained and submitted to SCDDSN in accordance with State Procurement and SCDDSN Directive 250-08-DD for approval before any work can be authorized. If three written bids could not be obtained, you should submit any actual written bids received along with documentation to include a list of the providers the family requested written bids from whom did not comply. This issue will be considered when the written bids are reviewed and a decision will be made by SCDDSN Central Office, according to State Procurement, if these attempts can be considered a “no bid” and count towards the three bid requirement. If not, continued efforts will be needed to located three (3) written bids.

When a bid is received the **Acknowledgement of Bid Submission for Private Vehicle Modifications (Community Supports Form 61)** must be completed and forward to all Providers that submitted a bid. This communication notifies the provider that you have received their bid and they **cannot** proceed with beginning services without written authorization from you.

At the time the three (3) written bids are submitted, the modification must be requested to the SCDDSN Waiver Administration Division. In all cases, the lowest bid must be indicated. In all cases, the award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. If a bid is submitted from a contractor that has been debarred by the State of South Carolina Materials Management Office, then the bid will be dismissed and a new bid will have to be obtained.

If the participant/legal guardian has communicated concerns and issues about using the lowest bidder that involve possible bad references, proof of faulty work, complaints from the Better Business Bureau, etc. you must submit in writing the reasons and concerns that the participant/legal guardian has about the provider. SCDDSN Central Office staff will examine this information and if legitimate, documented and substantiated concerns are noted, this information will be used to determine if the second lowest bidder can be used.

Once the request for the modification has been approved by the SCDDSN Waiver Administration Division, the participant/legal guardian must review the **Private Vehicle Modification Project Agreement (Community Supports Form 61)**, agree to its terms and sign it before services can be authorized. Once the form is signed, you can authorize the service.

Authorizing the Service: The **Authorization for Services (Community Supports Form VM-13)** should be used. Include a copy of the authorized bid and the Private Vehicle Modification assessment (if applicable).

Please note: if the participant and/or his/her legal guardian desires private vehicle modifications above the participant cost limit and can secure external and separate funding for those additional modifications, they can **privately** contract with the same professional/contractor. Any additional work portion funded by the family or other outside resources cannot be a part of the SCDDSN written authorization. It must be a separate contract between the participant/family and their chosen provider.

Monitoring the Services: You must monitor the effectiveness, benefits, and usefulness of the service along with the participant's/family's satisfaction with the service.

The following schedule should be followed when monitoring Private Vehicle Modifications:

- On site monitorship of completed modifications to verify that the work is complete, adequate, and satisfactory to the family within **two weeks** of completion.

Some items to consider during monitorship include:

- Has the modification begun? Is the participant satisfied with the work that has been done so far? Does the provider show the participant courtesy and respect when working on his/her vehicle?
- Once the modification is complete: Was the modification completed as originally prescribed?
- Is the participant satisfied with the end result of the modification?
- Is it functional?
- How has it made his/her vehicle more accessible and safe?
- Was he/she satisfied with the provider of the modifications?
- Are there additional needs that were included in the bid and the authorized modification that were not met by the provider?

Reduction, Suspension, or Termination of Services: If services need to be reduced, suspended, or terminated, a written notice must be forwarded to the participant or his/her legal guardian. Include the details regarding the change(s) in service and the Reconsideration and Appeal Information. You must wait ten (10) calendar days before proceeding with the reduction, suspension or termination of the service. See **Chapter 8** for specific details and procedures regarding written notification and the appeals process.